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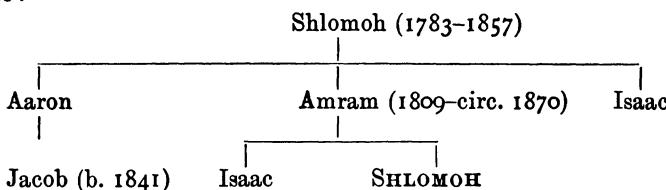
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NOTE ON *J.Q.R.*, XIV, PAGES 26 SQQ.

MAY I offer a few remarks on Dr. Skinner's interesting and careful description of a newly acquired Samaritan MS.? There is nothing of importance to add to what he has said, but after working at this literature for many years, perhaps I may be able to throw light on a few minor points.

In explaining the later colophon, on pp. 27, 28, it is important to remember that the author is thinking in Arabic, is trying to write in Hebrew and often slips into Aramaic. In מעמרות (line 2) therefore he probably has in mind the Arabic *جاء*, but the meaning is no doubt "restoration" as Dr. Skinner translates. In l. 6 "speedily" is quite right: *כִּרְבָּה* or *כִּרְבָּה* is often used in this sense. *כִּרְבָּה* *מסכינה* is the Aramaic emphatic form (which always ends in *ה* not *א*) and is the Arabic *العبد الفقير* (not "*his servant*"), an ordinary general way for a writer to describe himself. L. 9, *שמש המכתח הקדוש* is not "Shammash of the sacred school," but "servant of the holy law." *מכתח אבישע* is the ordinary phrase for the famous roll of the law supposed to have been written by Abisha, which is almost personified, so that it is sometimes even called *אזרון מכ' אב'*. He therefore naturally calls himself the servant of our master the law. Used alone, *ספר תורה = מכתח*. "The great name" is of course the Tetragrammaton. L. 10, *על פ'* I think means "by order of." L. 11, *נצחינו* is rare as a name, but common otherwise. It is used of God in the phrase *נצחינו כל קרביה* (in early MSS. more correctly *נצחינו כל מלחתמה*) where Petermann's edition should probably be emended to *נצחינו קרביה*. The termination is participial: e.g. *בריא = בריו, שְׁלִיעַ = שְׁמַעַי*. Thus *ناصر* or *منصور* is the Samaritan translation of the Arabic name *نصر*. L. 12, *קדוש התורה זה זאת* might be a mistake for *קדוש זה התורה*, but has become a sort of compound phrase for "the holy law," and the writer probably means *קדוש* in allusion to *שמורי תורה* (شְׁמָרִים) the name by which the Samaritans call themselves. L. 15, *خلف الله عليه يحلّ على* is simply the Arabic "may God make it up to him." L. 17, Dr. Skinner points *מקבר*, and this is no doubt the simplest way of taking it. I think, however, that the writer meant *מקבר* and that the whole line is an expansion of the common phrase *עד אין מקבר*; "peace . . . to the number of all that God created," i. e. unbounded peace. In the acrostic on p. 31 *הכָּהָן* can hardly be right, as that term is never applied to Moses. It probably should be *(הנְּבִיא)*.

The family of the writer will be best shown by the following table:—



Aaron was the eldest son of Shlomoh, but for some reason did not succeed his father, probably owing to mental disqualifications. The second son Amram became second priest with his father in 1827, a common practice in recent years. On the death of Shlomoh in 1857, Amram became head priest, and, since the succession properly belongs to the elder branch, he very rightly appointed his nephew Jacob second priest in the same year. On Amram's death (I have not the date, but it was between 1861 and 1876) Jacob became head priest and made his cousin Isaac second priest—an arrangement which still continues. In 1894 Jacob had three sons, of whom the eldest, Joseph, then about 17 years of age, was mentally weak and was not to succeed to the priesthood.

The family of מרכיב (Arab. مفترج) is well known from the colophons of MSS. The man ناصر = נצרי was the son of Isaac son of Joseph son of Joshua. His uncle, Joshua b. Joseph, copied the Bodleian MS. Samar. e. 5 in A.H. 1261.

In the colophon on pp. 30, 31, Abraham is the same person who twenty years later sold a MS. now in St. Petersburg, see Harkavy's catalogue, p. 181. He is called there Abr. b. Seth, but signs his name Abr. b. Seth Aaron. He was only second priest, since the transaction took place (in A.H. 929) before Pinhas b. Eleazar, head priest at Damascus from 915 till 945, when he removed to Nablus where he died in 956. A son of this Abraham, named Abdallah, who was עבתח or minister (Harkavy, *ibid.*), accompanied Pinhas in 945 as his secretary. They were a literary family. Seth-Aaron b. Isaac (it does not appear which of the two) wrote a hymn for Succoth (in the British Museum MS. Add. 19008, fol. 77); Abraham is probably the author of a few compositions and his son Abdallah wrote several pieces. With regard to the family of Abraham b. Sa'adah, my information is uncertain.

I hope the details of these obscure people are not too petty for consideration. They are difficult to collect, but perhaps the trouble is not altogether wasted if a little consecutive history is gained by it.